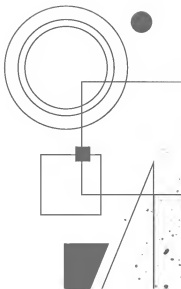


Innocent Noise

Sheep and Ice Cream, Former Part
by Imura Ei

Translated by schuyguy
Redraws by Chloe Von Einzbern
Edited by Caek



Maybe our plans for
the summer. Anyways,
something along
those lines

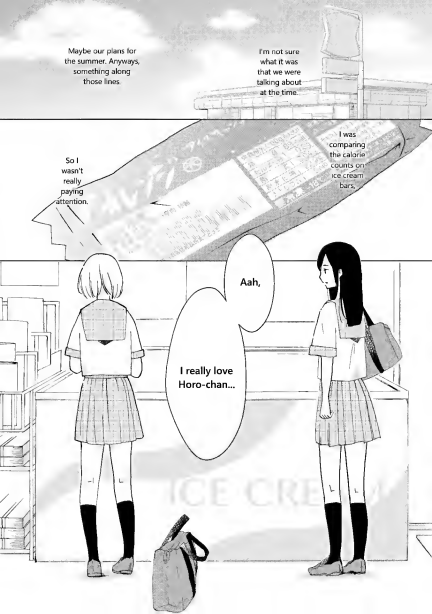
I'm not sure
what it was
that we were
talking about
at the time.

So I
wasn't
really
paying
attention.

I was
comparing
the calorie
counts on
ice cream
bars.

Aah,

I really love
Horo-chan...







It was like
the words
somehow
slipped out
before Youko
even realized
she was
speaking.



Her cheeks looked
like shaved ice
does right when
the strawberry syrup
starts to sink in.

As soon as
she realized,
she stiffened
her spine.



Horo-chan,
so you
ended up
picking
that one.





And with just those words,

Later.

Although peace returned to the world...

See you...
tomorrow.

しず
splash

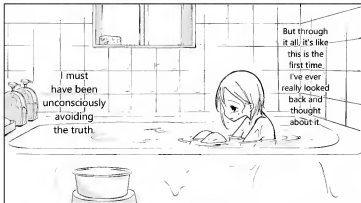
Aaah...

Sorry for what?

It's just like I'm retracing a maze backwards from the goal



I remember that I did feel just the slightest unease whenever something like that happened.



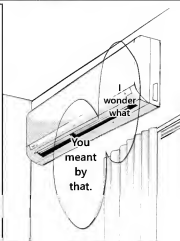
Certainly, Youko and I were very close.

We first met in high school, but we quickly became very good friends.

Even so, when our views occasionally differed, that was interesting as well.

As for why, it was perfectly ordinary. We shared common interests.

Well, I thought that's the reason...





If it were possible,
I would want us
to become
lovers,
Horo-chan.

L O V E R S



Ah, but
don't
worry.



Lov
-ers.



Maybe
what
I mean
is that,

I don't
want to
"traumatize"
you.

I won't
start
acting
strange,

Or
touch
you in
weird
ways.

Traumatize:

cause emotional damage



Once I said it...
I realized that something like this would happen.



F-friends

Let's stay
friends...

It's
like
she
knows
my
feelings
even
better
than
I do.



Horo-chan,
what do
you want
to do?

Youko...



Okay.
Then let's
do that.



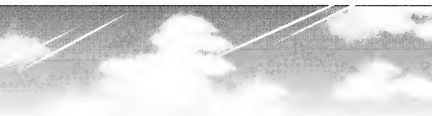
The talk
was over.

Yeah.

Is that
alright?

Eh?

Well, it was over, but in the end, I'm not sure what really happened.



The sky outside the window is like a bone-blue wall sprayed in bleach,
so gazing from the classroom is like looking at a glacier







.....



No
oo

!!

Also,
during
naptime,
she'd
wet—



Yup! Since
kinder-
garten!



Chalk, you
and Hara-chan
have been
together since
elementary
school, right?



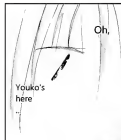
nbbit

nbbit

I used to
do things
like put frogs
on her head.



She was
real
slow.



Oh,

Youko's
here



grab!

up

I'm
sooooo
!!



I know.
Come to
my place
today.
Let's play!

Enough!

Somehow
I feel like
I've done
something
wrong.



Yeah.
I have to
write the
log.

I see.

*She said
she had some
work for the
athletics
committee.*

Also, I'm
waiting
for Chikl.

Huh,
you're
not going
home?



Umm,
maybe you
wanna chat
with me
while I
wait?



Bye,
then.

Ah—



Okay.

Youko didn't
approach me
without my
"permission"



But,
part
of
me
is
glad.

It's
kinda
cute.



Somehow
it's a little
sad, like
watching
a well-
trained
dog.



Probably out of a sense of superiority or something,
I felt some emotion I barely understand





If I did something like that, I wonder what would happen.



Somehow, this is even more—

I long for
just that
simple
pleasure.

?

Being
loved
by
some
-one.

What's
up?

Haa

Even though I myself give nothing,
even though I haven't really answered her.

Ah...
no.

Sorry...

It's
fine.

The setting sun shone through an open window.

Her
slightly
sweaty
forehead
glistened.

Gently,
the summer
breeze
lifted
Youko's
bangs.

Aah,
Youko
should
be so
much
happier.





Where
is this
coming
from?



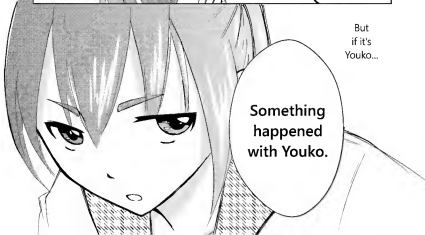
Pomf

Huh?



I don't
feel that
tension
at all...

When
Chiaki
touches
me,



But
if it's
Youko...

Something
happened
with Youko.



So, I don't
want to cut off
our relationship,
or something...
But I wonder if
that's unfair
to Youko.

I like Youko
a lot as a
friend.

If you tell me
something
like that,
you deserve
what's coming
to you!

Chiaki?

What?
You
mean...



I've known
you for way
longer
than her.

The
thing is,
I like
you too,
Horono...

I don't
want to
lose you
to a girl
who only
met you
in high
school.

Eh—



What
will
you
do?

Will our
relationship
end after
all this
time!?

...gh

But—



Eh—

Did
you
?

Did
you
kiss
Youko
?

What



We
haven't
done
anything
like
that!

Wait...

Who is this person?



Don't push into me against my will.

But
Chiaki



isn't
like
this—

Which
will it
be?

We can't
go back
now.

either
we're
lovers,

or it's
over.